

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Tom Rooney (R-Fla.) issued the following statement regarding the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) field hearing on its proposed numeric nutrient rule for Florida:

"Clearly this issue is not as cut and dry as the EPA contends. Yesterday's hearing was attended by hundreds of concerned citizens whose voices I have heard loud and clear. I have asked EPA to hold more public meetings and extend the public comment period so everyone involved can have a chance to be heard." "The long term ramifications of the proposed rules are causing great concern across a wide cross section of industry throughout the state. There are still too many questions that must be answered regarding the science used by the EPA. Additionally, the costs and feasibility of attainment that must be considered before moving forward with this proposed rule."

In 2009 the Environmental Protection Agency entered into a consent decree to set numeric nutrient levels for all of Florida's waters. This followed Florida working for several years and spending almost \$20 million to set its own levels. Under the Consent decree EPA issued proposed rules for Florida's rivers, lakes, streams, springs and canals in mid January with a brief public comment period to follow and the rule to be finalized in Oct of this year. There is great debate going on about the science used by the EPA to come up with these numbers, the fact that they are only holding three public hearings on the issue and that the cost and feasibility of attainment are not being considered.